



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

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Chapter:	C	Case Oversight & Management	
Subchapter:	8	Termination	
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Protective Services as a Non-Voluntary Program 11-29-2010

Child Protective Services (CPS) is not a voluntary program. CPS cases may not be terminated solely upon the request of the client or upon the client's refusal to cooperate, even in those situations where a client initially requested the service. All information regarding the case must be taken into consideration to ensure the safety and well-being of the child prior to the termination of the case.

Determining when to terminate agency services and intervention in a CPS case is one of the most important decisions in CP&P. Although the primary responsibility for assessing, preparing, and approving cases for closure rests with the assigned Worker and his or her Supervisor, higher level management within the Local Office and the Area Office share in this critical responsibility.

For cases opened for services, initiate efforts to accomplish the Case Plan and terminate CP&P intervention within 12 months.

Termination Criteria 10-3-2011

A case is terminated only when all children are safe and risk is, or has been reduced to, low or moderate. If there is no danger to the life and safety of any child, and any of the following conditions exist, apply the criteria provided to determine whether to terminate the case:

- The Case Plan is complete -- The problems identified by the Worker and client have been resolved and all goals and services are complete.
- Case Plan is not complete and client requests closing -- All case goals are not met, services are not complete, but all children are safe and the family does not want further services.
- The court has ordered termination. All children are safe.

- A child client has died and there are no other children in the family under CP&P supervision.
- An adolescent under CP&P supervision has reached the age of majority (age 18) AND requests that his or her case be closed. CP&P is required to continue to provide services to adolescents ages 18 to 21, to assist the adolescent to become an independent and productive adult, as long as the adolescent agrees to continue to accept services, and continuation of CP&P services is in the adolescent's best interest. See [CP&P-III-A-1-500](#), Services to Adolescents Age 18 to 21; particularly the section entitled Reasons to Close the Case of an Adolescent Age 18 to 21. See also [CP&P-VI-B-1-300](#), Adolescent Services Toward Self-Sufficiency, and [CP&P-VI-A-2-101](#), Independent Living.

If a CP&P case is closed based upon an adolescent's request, it may later be reopened upon the adolescent's request. See [CP&P-III-A-1-500](#), the section entitled Youth Ages 18 to 21 Requesting to Re-Open Their CP&P Case.

- An adolescent under CP&P supervision has reached his or her 21st birthday. See [CP&P-III-A-1-500](#), Services to Adolescents Age 18 to 21.
- Cases are closed on adolescents between the ages of 18 to 21 residing outside their family home only when:
 - Services are refused by the adolescent; or
 - The adolescent requests that his or her case be closed. See [CP&P-III-A-1-500](#) and N.J.S.A. 30:4C-2.3.

Termination of children under CP&P guardianship is outlined in [CP&P-IV-A-10-100](#).

When child abuse and/or neglect co-occurs with domestic violence, see additional case closing criteria in the [DCF Domestic Violence Protocol](#), Section IX, Case Closing.

The assigned Worker is required to visit all household members within 30 days prior to closing the case and complete a Risk-Reassessment. See [CP&P-III-C-3-100](#), (When In-Person Visits Occur) During Initial Response.

Supervisor and Worker Determine Whether to Open a Service Case or Terminate Intervention 11-29-2010

In situations where the assigned Worker and Supervisor have collaboratively managed the investigation within the time frames specified in policy, and

determined that there is no need to open a service case, the Supervisor and the Worker can determine, together, to terminate CP&P intervention.

Case closure -- including CPS investigations which, once completed, do not warrant the opening of a service case -- may be subject to review and approval by the Casework Supervisor, the Case Practice Specialist, the Local Office Manager, and/or the Director's Office.

Adoption finalization case closings do not require a special review by the Casework Supervisor or Case Practice Specialist. The LO Manager completes a thorough case review prior to signing the adoption consent.

Case Recording to Document Decision to Terminate Rather than Open a Service Case 5-28-2013

The assigned Worker documents the decision to terminate CP&P intervention at the end of the Initial Response Program in the electronic case record maintained in NJ SPIRIT as follows:

1. Investigations completed within 60 calendar days -- Complete the Investigation Summary, DCF Form 2-1, to document the investigation/response/finding determination. Complete DCF Form [2-1](#) as soon as information is gathered and assessed, within 45 days of assignment of the case from SCR (to allow the Supervisor time to review and approve the work). Also complete Contact Activity Notes in NJS (printable as Contact Sheets, CP&P Form [26-52](#)), to document additional contacts, contacts with collateral information sources, contacts made by a Supervisor or other staff, etc. Completion of a Case Summary for Closing/Transfer, CP&P Form [26-57](#), is not required.
2. For CPS cases closed at Intake, a Risk Assessment, CP&P Form [22-23](#), must be completed within 30 days prior to closing the case.
3. If case is prolonged in intake beyond 60 days, a Risk Reassessment, CP&P Form [22-26](#), is required within 30 days prior to closing the case, as follow up to completing the Initial Risk Assessment, CP&P Form [22-23](#).
4. Investigations completed beyond 60 days for cases identified for case closure (whether or not an extension is granted, in accordance with [CP&P-II-C-5-125](#), Good Cause to Extend Investigation Beyond 60 Calendar Days) -- For investigations that extend beyond the Initial Response Program time frame, necessitating continued CP&P supervision of the case beyond 60 days, in addition to completing the Investigation Summary, DCF Form [2-1](#), a Child Safety Assessment (In-Home), CP&P Form [22-22](#), a Risk Assessment, CP&P Form [22-23](#),

and Contact Activity Notes, also complete a Risk Reassessment, CP&P Form [22-26](#).

The assigned Worker approves all work electronically in NJS.

The Supervisor reviews and approves electronically the Investigation Summary, DCF Form [2-1](#), Safety and Risk Reassessments, and Contact Activity Notes within the 60 day Initial Response period. When the investigation is extended, the Supervisor approves the Case Summary for Closing/Transfer, CP&P Form [26-57](#), and the Risk Reassessment, CP&P Form [22-26](#), to document supervisory concurrence with the plan to terminate CP&P intervention within an approved “extension” period.

If an investigation extends beyond 60 days, a Case Plan, CP&P Form [26-81ab](#), Family Summary/Case Plan, is also required, to justify continued investigation efforts for a prolonged period of time.

CPS Reports Alleging Abuse/Neglect Where a Child or Other Persons Critical to the Investigation Have not Been Located 3-15-2010

Exhaustive search necessary -- Any CPS investigation that has an outstanding allegation, where the family or a child cannot be located by the Division, cannot be concluded without undertaking an exhaustive search to find him, her or them.

Conduct the search in accordance with policy at [CP&P-III-C-4-100](#) -- Document all search efforts. Consider whether to contact the New Jersey Parent Locator Service through the Division of Family Development. Consult the Deputy Attorney General (DAG) to determine whether it is appropriate to seek court intervention.

Child/family missing six months -- If child/family is missing/whereabouts unknown, and six months have elapsed since the Division initiated documented efforts to locate him, her or them, with all such initiatives having failed, proceed to document efforts in NJ SPIRIT by completing the Person Management Window and entering “missing” status for the child/family. The Local Office (LO) Manager may determine that agency intervention should be terminated/the case be closed. See the chart below for entering “missing” status for the child/family in the Person Management Window:

Go to Person Management Window >	Click Address Tab
Look for the most recent open/closed primary residence address >	Click Edit
Enter the date the child/family member(s) "ran away" or went "missing" in the end date field >	Save and Close
Click Insert >	Select "Primary Residence" address type
Enter a new date in the entry date field of the "runaway" or "missing" status>	Enter "missing or "runaway" in the C/O field
Save and Close	

For a child who runs away from placement, click here to view the NJ SPIRIT Cheat Sheet, "Document a Child in Runaway Status."

Service case in active litigation -- The DAG must be consulted to determine how long a service case should remain open in light of current litigation and/or warrants. The Local Office (LO) Manager may consult Area Office administrative staff about the decision to terminate intervention, close the service case, or take further action to locate the family.

Case in litigation or child in placement -- If the child or his or her parents are under court order and/or the child is in out-of-home placement at the time of the disappearance, the court, Law Guardian, and/or DAG, as appropriate, must agree to termination.

See also [CP&P-II-C-5-125](#), Good Faith Effort (to locate child victims and client families at time of investigation).

Client Involvement and Preparation for Termination 4-4-2005

The Worker involves clients in the decision whether to open a service case or terminate agency intervention. Prepare clients for termination of CP&P intervention within a reasonable period of time prior to the anticipated termination date.

Send the client a letter confirming the termination and its effective date, for cases closed at intake. Use CP&P Form [26-63](#), Letter to Client Terminating CP&P Involvement.

The CP&P Form [26-63](#) may be used for case closings following longer term service provision, if it is modified, as appropriate, to reflect the case situation. Include a statement in the letter advising the client of his or her right to request

an Administrative Review, if he or she disagrees with the decision to terminate the case.

Court Notification 11-29-2011

Whenever there is a current court order, the court must be notified and approve CP&P intent to terminate the case. If the child is missing, advise the court of CP&P attempts to locate the child. See [CP&P-III-C-4-100](#), Locating a Missing Child/Family.

When CP&P is not requesting an extension of a supervision or custody order, notify the court of CP&P intent to terminate services at least two weeks prior to the court order expiration date.

Procedures Related to Termination 10-3-2011

Worker	1. Conduct CPS investigation, as warranted. Determine that one of the considerations for termination exists. Obtain client family input regarding whether there is need for continued agency intervention or services.
Worker and Supervisor	2. Conference to determine whether to open a service case or terminate agency intervention. 3. Make mutual decision regarding need for additional field and/or collateral contacts, if case practice deficiencies are apparent. Consult the Case Practice Specialist as needed. Refer any dispute to the Casework Supervisor or Local Office Manager for resolution. If work is pending, determine whether there is good cause to extend the investigation beyond 60 calendar days. See CP&P-II-C-5-125 .
Supervisor	4. Approve termination.
Worker	5. Discuss with parents/guardian/caregiver the alternatives of opening a service case or terminating CP&P intervention, as appropriate. 6. Complete a Risk Assessment, CP&P Form 22-23 , within 30 days prior to closing an Intake case or a Risk Reassessment, CP&P 22-26, within 30 days prior to all other case closings. For cases in intake beyond 60 days, complete both risk and risk reassessment forms within the mandated time frames. Determine risk is, or has been reduced to, low or moderate. 7. Consult the DAG, as needed. Request and receive approval from the Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part to terminate, if there is a standing court order of supervision or custody.

Worker and Supervisor	<p>8. Send a Letter to Client Terminating Involvement, CP&P Form 26-63, to the client per CP&P-IX-F-1-100. Add language advising the client that he or she has a right to appeal the decision to terminate.</p> <p>9. Send the reporter a Letter to Reporter/Referral Source, CP&P Form 26-64, if notification has been requested.</p>
Worker	<p>10. Prepare an Investigation Summary, DCF Form 2-1, in NJ SPIRIT as soon as information is gathered and assessed, within 45 days of assignment of the case from SCR. Complete Contact Activity Notes, as applicable.</p> <p>11. When closing out an investigation that extended beyond 60 days from initial response, also complete a Case Summary for Closing/Transfer, CP&P Form 26-57.</p> <p>12. Approve work in NJ SPIRIT.</p>
Supervisor	<p>13. Review and approve assigned Worker's completed Investigation Summary, DCF Form 2-1, Contact Activity Notes, and other work in NJS (electronic approval).</p>

The Worker and Supervisor complete the entire investigation and case closure process within 60 calendar days of SCR assigning the CPS report to the Local Office for response.

(For investigations extending beyond 60 days, see [CP&P-II-C-5-125](#).)

A CPS report/case record may be subject to further review and approval by the Casework Supervisor, the Case Practice Specialist, the Local Office Manager, and/or the Director's Office.

For a comprehensive description of the child protective service investigation and intake process, see [CP&P-II-C-5-100](#), Child Protection Investigation Work flow.